Percentage of armed recruits from Orissa

*282. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the percentage of recruitment in armed forces from Orissa is less as compared to other States;

(b) the number of recruitment centres of Army, Navy and Air Force separately in Orissa; and

(c) the reasons for less recruitment from Orissa and the remedial steps proposed for it?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The recruitment of Sailors in Navy and Airmen in Air Force is carried out on the basis of all-India merit and no specific quota is allotted to any particular State. Therefore, no comparison can be drawn with respect to recruitment to these forces from different States.

The recruitment of Jawans in Army is based on allocation of vacancies to States. Distribution of 'all-India all class vacancies' of Army among States is done on the basis of their Recruitable Male Population (RMP). The RMP is that proportion of the male population, which meets the laid down age limits and minimum standards of education for enrolment to Army. This is expressed as a percentage of the total Male Population (TMP). This method of allocation of vacancies among the States/UTs ensures that each State gets its due and equitable share of vacancies available in a year in Army. The RMP of Orissa is 3.66 per cent which is more than that of 21 States/Union Territories.

As the States have different allocation of vacancies because of variation in population, State-wise recruitment to Army generally conforms to the allocation profile.

The position of vacancies allotted to Orissa and the actual intake during the last three years was as under:

Year	Vacancies allotted	Actual intake	Shortfall
1996-97	1373	1294	5.75%
1997-98	911	889	2.40%
1998-99	805	641	20.37%

The above table would show that there are minor shortfalls in the years 1996-97 and 1997-98 whereas the shortfall in 1998-99 is large.

The following seem to be the main reasons for shortfall in recruitment to Army in Orissa :

(a) Low success rate in written examination.

(b) Non-confirmation to the prescribed physical and medical standards.

The following measures have been taken to improve recruitment in Orissa:—

(i) Wider publicity for recruitment rallies to attract large number of youth.

(ii) Grant of special dispensation in education qualification to Adivasis of Orissa from class 10 to class 5 for joining Army as soldier(GD).

(iii) Directions have been issued that RMP based quota of any State should not lapse; if it is not filled in a particular year the backlog should be carried forward to the next year.

There are the following recruitment centres of Army, Navy and Air Force in Orissa:—

Army	Navy	Air Force
Branch Recruiting Office (BRO) at (1) Sambalpur, (2) Cuttack and (3) Berhampore	Naval Recruitment Centre at Indian Naval Ship, Chilka	Airmen Selection Centre at Bhubaneswar

MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Sir, I want to know from the Defence Minister, through you, that if the RMP based quota did not lapse, in the year 1999-2000, the shortfall of 28.52 per cent would have been made up. Please give the exact figures of clearance of the backlog as well as the current years' recruitment position, with special reference to SC & ST.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, in the army recruitment, there is no SC-ST or any particular category that is being listed. A soldier is a soldier. He is recruited as a soldier. Therefore, it won't be possible to produce the figures on the basis of caste or religion or any other factor because that is not how the army operates. Sir, in as carry forward of the backlog is concerned, this is an order that

was passed by me last year. I saw that in many of the States, there was always under-recruitment and that under-recruitment then got either transferred to some other State or it just lapsed. Therefore, this order was passed last year and I have given here the figures of 1998-99 where there has been a shortfall, and I have also listed the reasons why the shortfall has been there. I believe, and I am sure, that in the course of the current years, much of the backlog will be filled up, but I am unable to give you the exact figures of the current year because the current financial year is yet to get over.

MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Sir, our Orissa State is widely populated with Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. My second question is: Has the Defence Services Recruitment Board taken steps to motivate and train young Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe persons of Orissa to join the Defence Services as commissioned officers?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, as commissioned officers are concerned, this is done through all India recruitment. So, it won't be confined to any particular State. But, Sir, as adivasis' special recruitment is concerned, it is considered as a fixed class for two regiments, the Bihar regiment and the para-regiment where the adivasis of Orissa have a special quota that is available to them. Sir, the only other point that I want to make is, the hon. Member has spoken about training the tribal people. This is something I am motivating, this is something which, I believe, the State Government needs to get into and we are prepared to give all cooperation in this respect.

श्री सनातन बिसि: सर, इसमें लिखा गया है कि वाइड पब्लिसिटी दी जा रही है-

Grant of special disposition in educational qualification to adivasis of Orissa from class ten to class five for joining Army.

यह हम लोगों के आदमी जानते नहीं हैं। मैं मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या हम लोगों की रीजनल लैंग्वेजेज में इसकी पब्लिसिटी करेंगे?

श्री जार्ज फर्नान्डीज: जब भर्ती का काम होता है तो जिला स्तर पर या एक जिला समूह के स्तर पर यह कार्य हम लोग करते हैं। इसका अखबारों के जरिए प्रचार अवश्य होता है और लोकल भाषाओं में भी यह काम किया जाता है।

DR. M.N. DAS: Sir, in the British days, requisite recruitments to the Army were made according to the martial qualities of a particular race. They made an assessment about that. Now, I can tell you that the tribals of Orissa

can be the best fighters in the Indian Army, provided they are recruited properly, given a chance of promotion and are also encouraged to apply to the Army. Sir, my humble suggestion is that you have recruitment centres at Sambalpur, Cuttack and Berhampur. Why not one in Bolangir, the centre of the famous KBK area?

The entire region is dominated by tribal population. The medical standards for recruitment are quite all right. But so far as the physical standards are concerned, we sometimes get the information that you don't recruit people now if their height is short even by a hair's breadth, whereas when the British selected soldiers for the Army, they did not give much emphasis to height. The British considered the Gurkhas as one of the best fighters, despite their short stature.

I request the hon. Defence Minister to kindly take into consideration these two proposals—one, that Bolangir be made one of the recruiting centres and, two, physical standards for recruitment, particularly in respect of height, may not be followed too strictly.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, I have visited many of our forward positions where the troops are deployed and I am aware of the fact that the soldiers, who come from Orissa, are among the finest that we have. There are no two opinions about this. Insofar as the standards of recruitment are concerned, I am sure the hon. Member will agree, and the House will agree, that there has to be a cut-off point somewhere. So, once you have a cut-off point, then you can't possibly say, it is half-an-inch above that or a quarter of an inch more than that. It will be difficult to keep on altering it or applying it to suit a particular individual or a particular category. So, therefor, where height is concerned, there is a consideration that is given to the tribal people, just as it is given to the Gurkhas.

In matter of educational qualification also, there is a certain consideration that is given to certain communities, to certain regions and to certain people. Therefore, there are no standard norms all over the country. For different areas, there are different norms. In Orissa, I am aware that where the tribals are concerned, there is a relaxation of certain norms.

So far as the recruitment centres are concerned, we have stopped the setting up of recruitment offices. What we are doing is that we are holding rallies, as I said earlier, in different district headquarters or in a group of districts, and I will certainly accept the hon. Member's suggestion and see to it that

Bolangir received special consideration because of the tribal population there. We will hold regular rallies in Bolangir to see to it that people living in that area get an opportunity to enrol themselves.

श्री सूर्यभान पाटील वहाडणे: माननीय सभापति जी, उड़ीसा में भर्ती में सुधार लाने के लिए निम्नलिखित उपाय किए गए ऐसा उसमें कहा है और पिछले 5 वर्ष का यहां रेकार्ड है वह हर वर्ष कम ही कम आ रहा है। यह जो सुविधा दी है वह कौन-से साल में दी है?

श्री जार्ज फर्नान्डीज: कौन-सी सुविधा?

श्री सूर्यभान पाटील वहाडणे: उड़ीसा में भर्ती में सुधार लाने के लिए निम्नलिखित उपाय किए गए हैं तो ये जो उपाय किए गए हैं ये कब से लागू किए हैं?

श्री जार्ज फर्नान्डीज: सभापति महोदय, ये तो लगातार चलने वाले उपाय हैं, इसमें कोई नई चीज़ हमने नहीं की है। ये लगातार चल रहे हैं और उसमें कुछ विशेष बल देने की बात उड़ीसा में चलती रही है और आज भी चल रही है। सर, मैं एक बात यह कहूं कि माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि लगातार कम होता जा रहा है। सेना में पिछले दो सालों से 50 हजार जवानों की संख्या कम किए जाने का एक सिलसिला शुरू हुआ और वह भी एक कारण है कि जिस मात्रा में भर्ती समूचे देश में हो रही थी, उसमें कुछ कमी हुई है। उड़ीसा के बारे में लिखित जवाब में यह कहा है कि वहां जितनी हम भर्ती करना चाहते थे उतने लोग वहां नहीं आए थे। यदि आए होते तो भर्ती निश्चित तौर पर हो गई होती। उड़ीसा में उदाहरणार्थ, सभापति जी, हमने इसमें बता दिया है और अब मैं यह बता दूं आपको कि जहां तक फिक्स्ड रेक्रूटमेंट का सवाल है तो इस साल फिक्स्ड रेक्रूटमेंट का कोटा 100 था और भर्ती 177 की हुई। इसलिए जहां लोग आए, वहां भर्ती हुई है और जितना कोटा था, उससे अधिक भर्ती हुई है। हम चाहेंगे कि उड़ीसा में लोग सामने आएं और राज्य सरकार उनके लिए विशेष प्रशिक्षण आदि की व्यवस्था भी करेगी।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ravi, do you want to put a question relating to Orissa?

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Sir, I want to put a general question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, general question. The Question should relate to Orissa only.

*283. *[The questioner (Shri Abani Roy) was absent. For Answer, vide* Page *21 infra.]*